(b) the estimated cost of the above project, the allocation made therefor and the expenditure incurred thereon so far; and

(c) the time by which the above airport is likely to be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the State Government Authorities have carried out preliminary site inspection of various sites near Cannanore for construction of an airport.

(c) This project, at present, is at preliminary stage and no definite time schedule, for the commissioning of the airport can be indicated.

Shortage of Trains and Coaches

2120. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the difficulties expressed by the passengers of Kayamkulam, Alleppey and Ernakulam sector due to the shortage of passenger trains and coaches;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to introduce more passenger trains in this sector and to attach more coaches in the existing passenger trains; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) Some representations have been received about shortage of coaches and for additional train services in Ernakulam-Alleppey-Kayankulam section.

(c) and (d) Provision of better travel facilities, including additional train services and augmenting the load of existing trains is an ongoing process on Indian Railways subject to availability of resources, operationa feasibility and traffic justification. During 1997-98, it has been decided to extend 6315/6316 Howrah/Cochin (weekly) Express upto Trivandrum via Alleppey and Kayankulam.

Running of EMU Trains

2121. DR. ASIM BALA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that with minimum investment it would be possible to run EMU Trains from Krishnanagar/Ranaghat/Kalyani to Bandel/ Howrah/Barddhaman by using the existing curvs line which are lying un-utilised of Naihati Railway Station;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering for conducting survey to make use of this un-utilised railway line thereby establish direct rail service between the above mentioned places;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether it is also a fact that it will give relief to thousands of passengers as well as reduce the pressure on the junction stations;

(e) if so, the steps to be taken by the Government in this regard; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) The curve line near Naihati has been dismantled.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) to (f) Direct EMU services are available between Krishnanagar/Ranaghat/Kalyani to Sealdah. Separate EMU trains are available on Naihati-Bandel section and between Barddhaman-Bandel and Bandel-Howrah.

Circular Railway between Princep Ghat and Majerhat

2122. SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken any decision to complete the missing link between Princep Ghat and Majerhat section of Circular Railway, Calcutta;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering for electrification and doubling of this section to reduce pressure on major railway stations of Calcutta Suburban;

(c) if so, when and the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (d) The entire 13.5 km non-electrified single line project from Dum Dum Jn. to Princepghat has been commissioned in stages for traffic by 17.6.90 except the part from Princepghat to Majerhat. Fresh Techno-economic survey for single line from Princepghat to Majerhat has been taken up by Eastern Railway. A study for doubling and electrification of Dum Dum to Princep Ghat section has been carried by M/s. RITES for West Bengal Government.

Development of Kerala Telecom

2123. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount earmarked for development of telecom for Kerala this year;

(b) the corresponding amounts during the past three years;

(c) whether Kerala circle has completed development works as targeted;

(d) if so, the details of the amount spent for telecom development in Kerala this year and for each of the previous three years; and